VIVEKANANDA
HIS CALL TO THE NATION

A COMPILATION

Published on the occasion of
150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Indian youths are now at the cross-roads. On one side they see the pompous show of wealth, luxury, enjoyments, and on the other side they see millions of people without enough food or clothing, struggling to survive in miserable conditions. India's priceless spiritual heritage is now facing the challenge of materialistic values.

In this dire situation the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda can be of immense benefit and help to all people. They contain the distilled essence of India's spiritual treasures explained in the simplest language in the light of modern rational thought and science. They are universal in their scope and are meant for all people belonging to all strata of society, all religions and all races.

The present book is compiled from the 9-volume *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. As a part of the celebration of Swamiji's 150th Birth Anniversary (2013-

2014), this book is being made available at a subsidized price.

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Give me a few men and women who are pure and selfless, and I shall shake the world.

*   *   *

The older I grow, the more everything seems to me to lie in manliness. This is my new gospel.

— Swami Vivekananda

A BRIEF LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

EARLY DAYS

Swami Vivekananda, or Narendranath Datta, or simply Naren, as he was called in his pre-monastic days, was born to Vishwanath Datta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi in Calcutta on Monday, 12 January 1863. The Datta family was rich, respectable, and renowned for charity, learning, and a strong spirit of independence. Narendranath's grandfather, Durgacharan Datta, was well-versed in Persian and Sanskrit and was skilled in law. But after the birth of his son Vishwanath, he renounced the world and became a monk. He was then only twenty-five years of age.

Vishwanath Datta was an attorney-at-law in the Calcutta High Court. He was proficient in English and Persian, and took great delight in reciting to his family the poems of

the Persian poet Hafiz. He also enjoyed the study of the Bible and of the Hindu scriptures in Sanskrit. Though charitable to an extravagant degree and sympathetic towards the poor, Vishwanath was rationalistic and progressive in outlook in matters religious and social, owing perhaps to the influence of western culture. Bhuvaneshwari Devi was an accomplished lady with a regal bearing. She was deeply religious. Before the birth of Narendranath, though she had daughters, she yearned for a son and asked one of her relatives at Varanasi to make religious offerings to Vīreśvara Śiva. It is said that she dreamt later that Śiva promised to be born as her son. Narendranath was born some time afterwards.

In his early childhood, Narendranath was rather restless and given to much fun and frolic. But at the same time, he had a great attraction for spiritual matters and would play at worshipping or meditating on the images of Rāma-Sītā, Śiva, etc. The stories of the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*, which his mother told him, left an indelible impression on his mind. Traits such as courage, sympathy for the poor, and attraction towards wandering monks appeared spontaneous-

ly in him. Even in childhood, Narendranath demanded convincing arguments for every proposition. With these qualities of head and heart, he grew into a vigorous youth.

AT THE FEET OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

As a youth, Narendranath's leonine beauty was matched by his great courage. He had the build of an athlete, a resonant voice, and a brilliant intellect. He distinguished himself in athletics, philosophy, and music, and among his colleagues was the undisputed leader. At college, he studied and absorbed western thought, and this implanted a spirit of critical inquiry in his mind. His inborn tendency towards spirituality and his respect for ancient religious traditions and beliefs, on the one side, and his argumentative nature, coupled with his sharp intellect, on the other, were now at war with each other. In this predicament, he tried to find comfort in the Brāhmo Samāj, the popular socio-religious movement of the time. The Brāhmo Samāj believed in a formless God, deprecated the worship of idols, and addressed itself to various forms of social reform. Narendranath also met prominent religious leaders,

but could not get a convincing answer from them to his questions about the existence of God. This only accentuated his spiritual restlessness.

At this critical juncture, he remembered the words of his Professor, William Hastie, who had mentioned that a saint lived at Dakshineswar, just outside Calcutta, who experienced the ecstasy described by Wordsworth in his poem, *The Excursion*. His cousin Ramachandra Datta also induced him to visit the saint. Thus came about, in 1881, the historic meeting of these two great souls, the prophet of modern India and the carrier of his message. Narendranath asked: 'Sir, have you seen God?' Sri Ramakrishna answered his question in the affirmative: 'Yes, I have seen Him just as I see you here, only more intensely.' At last, here was one who could assure him from his own *experience* that God existed. His doubt was dispelled. The disciple's training had begun.

While Sri Ramakrishna tested him in so many ways, Narendranath, in turn, tested Sri Ramakrishna in order to ascertain the truth of his spiritual assertions. At one stage, after the passing away of his father in 1884, Na-

rendranath's family suffered many troubles and privations. At the suggestion of his Master, Narendranath tried to pray to Mother Kālī at Dakshineswar for the alleviation of his family's distress. He found, however, that although his need was for wealth, he could pray only for knowledge and devotion.

Gradually, Narendranath surrendered himself to the Master. And Sri Ramakrishna, with infinite patience, calmed the rebellious spirit of his young disciple and led him forth from doubt to certainty and from anguish to spiritual bliss. But, more than Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual guidance and support, it was his love which conquered young Narendranath, love which the disciple reciprocated in full measure.

With Sri Ramakrishna's illness and his removal to Cossipore, on the outskirts of Calcutta, for treatment, began Narendranath's final training under his guru. It was a time remarkable for the intense spiritual fire which burned within him and which expressed itself through various intense practices. The Master utilized the opportunity to bring his young disciples under the leadership of Narendra. And when Narendra asked that he might be absorbed in *nirvikalpa samādhi*, or-

dinarily regarded as the highest spiritual experience, the Master admonished him saying: 'Shame on you! I thought you would grow, like a huge banyan, sheltering thousands from the scorching misery of the world. But now I see you seek your own liberation.' All the same, Narendra had the much-coveted realization, after which the Master said that the key to this would thenceforth remain in his keeping and the door would not be opened till Narendra had finished the task for which he had taken birth. Three or four days before his *mahāsamādhi*, Sri Ramakrishna transmitted to Narendranath his own power and told him: 'By the force of the power transmitted by me, great things will be done by you; only after that will you go to whence you came.'

After the passing away of the Master in August 1886, many of the young disciples gathered together in an old dilapidated house at Baranagore under the leadership of Narendranath. Here, in the midst of a life of intense austerity and spiritual practices, the foundation of the Ramakrishna brotherhood was laid. It was during these days that Narendranath, along with many of his brother disciples, went to Antpur; and there on Christmas Eve (1886), sitting round a huge fire in

the open, they took the vow of *sannyāsa*. The days at Baranagore were full of great joy, study, and spiritual practices. But the call of the wandering life of the *sannyāsin* was now felt by most of the monks. And Narendranath, too, towards the close of 1888, began to take temporary excursions away from the Math.

THE WANDERING MONK

A remarkable change of outlook came over Narendranath between the closing of 1888, when he first left on his temporary excursions, and 1890, when he parted finally from his brethren and travelled alone as an unknown mendicant. He began to assume various names in order to conceal his identity so that he might be swallowed up in the immensity of India.

Now it was that the natural desire of an Indian monk for a life of solitude gave way to the prescience that he was to fulfil a great destiny; that his was not the life of an ordinary recluse struggling for personal salvation. Under the influence of his burning desire to know India better and the mute appeal rising all around him from oppressed

India, he went first to Varanasi, the holiest city of the Hindus. After Varanasi, he visited Lucknow, Agra, Vrindaban, Hathras, and Rishikesh and then returned to Baranagore for a time. At Hathras, he met Sarat Chandra Gupta who became his first disciple (Swami Sadananda). He revealed to him the mission entrusted to him by his Master, namely, the spiritual regeneration of India and the world. Sarat, who was on the staff of the railway station at Hathras, resigned his post and followed his guru to help him in his mission.

An important event in the Swami's life at this time occurred in 1890, when he met Pavhari Baba of Gazipur, for whose saintliness he had the greatest admiration throughout his life. At this time, he was torn between the desire, on the one hand, to become absorbed in the eternal silence of the Absolute and, on the other, the desire to fulfil his Master's mission. He hoped that Pavhari Baba would appease the remorse gnawing at his heart, which was due to the fact that fervour for the highest absorption in the Divine drew him away from the work entrusted to him by his Master. For twenty-one days, Naren was on the point of yielding to this temptation,

but the vision of Sri Ramakrishna always came to draw him back.

In July 1890, the Swami took leave of Sri Sarada Devi, the holy consort of Sri Ramakrishna, who was the spiritual guide of the young monks after the Master's passing away. He also took leave of his brother monks, with the firm resolve to cut himself free from all ties and to go into the solitude of the Himalayas, for he felt it essential to be alone. In the words of Romain Rolland: 'This was the great departure. Like a diver, he plunged into the Ocean of India and the Ocean of India covered his tracks. Among its flotsam and jetsam, he was nothing more than one nameless *sannyāsin* in saffron robe among a thousand others. But the fire of genius burned in his eyes. He was a prince despite all disguise.'

His wandering took him to various places of pilgrimage and historical interest in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore, Kerala, Madras, and Hyderabad. Everywhere the glory of ancient India vividly came before his eyes, whether political, cultural, or spiritual. In the midst of this great education, the abject misery of the Indian masses stood out before his mind. He moved from one princely State to another,

everywhere to explore avenues of mitigating their lot. Thus he came to meet many leading personalities and rulers of the princely States. Among them, Maharaja Ajit Singh of Khetri became his fast friend and ardent disciple. At Alwar, he studied the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali. At Poona, he stayed with Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the great national leader. At first, Tilak talked with the Swami somewhat ironically, but later his depth of learning and profundity of thought impressed him, and he invited the Swami to stay with him. From there, after a stay at Belgaum, he went to Bangalore and Mysore. The Maharaja of Mysore gave him the assurance of financial support to enable him to go to the West to seek help for India and to preach the eternal religion. From Mysore, he visited Trivandrum and Kanya Kumari.

Wherever he went, it was not the important places and people that impressed him most. It was the terrible poverty and misery of the masses that caused his soul to burn in agony. He had travelled through the whole of India, often on foot, for nearly three years, coming to know the country at first hand. Now he had reached the end of his journey, as it were. He prostrated himself with great

feeling before the image of Mother Kumārī at the Kanyā Kumārī temple. Then he swam across the sea to a rock off the south coast, and sitting there for the whole night went into deep meditation. The vast panorama of his experiences during his travels passed before his mind's eye. He meditated on the past, the present, and the future of India, the causes of her downfall, and the means of her resurrection. He then took the momentous decision to go to the West to seek help for the poor of India and thus give shape to his life's mission.

With this decision, he journeyed to Rameswaram and Madurai. He then went on to Madras, where a group of young men, headed by Alasinga Perumal, were eagerly awaiting his arrival. To them, he revealed his intention of visiting America to attend the Parliament of Religions that was being convened at Chicago. His young disciples forthwith raised a subscription for his passage. But the Swami was not yet certain that it was the Divine Mother's will that he should go, and so he asked them to give away the money to the poor. At this juncture, the Swami had a symbolic dream in which Sri Ramakrishna walked out into the sea and beckoned him to

follow. This, coupled with the blessings and permission of Sri Sarada Devi, who also, in a dream, had received Sri Ramakrishna's consent, settled the question for him, and his young friends again set about collecting the necessary funds.

He next paid a short visit to Hyderabad. Then, while arrangements were being made for his journey to America, there came a sudden invitation from the Maharaja of Khetri to attend celebrations in connection with the birth of his son. The Swami could not refuse this invitation from his disciple. The Maharaja received him cordially and promised to help him in every possible way. And it was here, at his suggestion, that the Swami assumed the name 'Vivekananda'. True to his word, the Maharaja sent his personal secretary with the Swami to equip him for the journey and see him off at Bombay. His journey to America commenced on 31 May 1893.

ON THE WORLD STAGE

Swami Vivekananda travelled to America via China, Japan, and Canada, and reached Chicago about the middle of July. At Canton, he saw some Buddhist monasteries; in

Japan, he noted with admiration the industrial progress and cleanliness of the people. Now, at Chicago, so dazzling with riches and the inventive genius of the West, he was puzzled like a child. To his disappointment, he learnt that the Parliament of Religions would not be held until September, and that no one could be a delegate without credentials. He felt lost, but resigning himself to the will of Providence, he went to Boston which was less expensive than Chicago. In the train, he happened to become acquainted with Miss Katherine Sanborn, who invited him to be her guest at Boston. Through her, he came to know Professor John Henry Wright of Harvard University, who gave him a letter of introduction to the Chairman of the Parliament of Religions. In the course of this letter, Dr. Wright said: 'Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together.'

The Swami returned to Chicago a couple of days before the opening of the Parliament of Religions, but found to his dismay that he had lost the address of the committee which was providing hospitality for the oriental delegates. After a night's rest in a huge box in the railway freight-yard, the Swami set out

in the morning to find somebody who could help him out of this difficulty. But help for a coloured man was not readily available. Exhausted by a fruitless search, he sat down on the roadside resigning himself to the divine will. Suddenly, a lady of regal appearance emerged from the fashionable house opposite, approached him, and offered him help. This was Mrs. George W. Hale, whose house was to become in future the permanent address of the Swami while in the United States, for the Hale family became his devoted followers.

The Parliament of Religions opened on 11 September 1893. The spacious hall of the Art Institute was packed with nearly 7000 people, representing the best culture of the country. On the platform, every organized religion from all corners of the world had its representatives. The Swami had never addressed such a huge and distinguished gathering. He felt extremely nervous. When his turn came, he mentally bowed down to Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, and then began his address with the words, 'Sisters and Brothers of America'. Immediately, there was thunderous applause from the vast audience, and it lasted for full two minutes. 'Seven thousand

people rose to their feet as a tribute to something, they knew not what.' The appeal of his simple words of burning sincerity, his great personality, his bright countenance, and his orange robes was so great that next day the newspapers described him as the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. The simple monk with a begging bowl had become the man of the hour.

All the subsequent speeches of the Swami at the Parliament were listened to with great respect and appreciation. They all had one common theme—universality. While all the delegates to the Parliament spoke of their own religion the Swami spoke of a religion that was vast as the sky and deep as the ocean. When the Parliament ended, the days of quiet had ended for the Swami. What followed were days of hectic lecturing in almost every part of the United States. Having signed a contract for a lecture tour with a bureau, the Swami had to be constantly on the move, speaking to all sorts of audiences. Though this tour provided him with opportunities of knowing the different aspects of western life at first hand, he found that the bureau exploited and embarrassed him. He felt disgusted and severed his connection

with it. Now he wanted to form a group of earnest American disciples, and began classes, free of charge, for sincere students. His stay in the West, which lasted till December 1896, was packed with intense activity: besides innumerable lectures and classes at New York, he founded a Vedanta Society there; he trained a band of close disciples at the Thousand Island Park; and he wrote *Rāja-yoga* and paid two successful visits to England, where he gave the lectures which now form *Jñāna-yoga*. There he made some disciples, prominent among them being Capt. and Mrs. Sevier, Sister Nivedita, and E. T. Sturdy. Earlier, in New York, J. J. Goodwin, a young English stenographer had been accepted as his disciple. It was during these visits that he had the pleasure of meeting the great savant Max Müller. During his tour of Europe in the summer of 1895, he also met the famous German orientalist Paul Deussen.

He had laboured hard to give to the West his message of Vedānta as the universal principle basic to all religions, and his effort had by now resulted in the establishment of the Vedānta work on a permanent basis in the United States. The London work, too, had made some progress. Now his motherland

was calling him and was eager to receive his message. So, from London, he started for India at the end of 1896. Besides his American and English disciples, he left behind his brother disciples Saradananda and Abhedananda to carry on the work.

TRIUMPHAL RETURN

Swami Vivekananda left London with the Seviers on 16 December 1896, and after a visit to Rome and other places in Italy, he took the boat for India at Naples on 30 December. At Naples, Mr. Goodwin joined the party. They reached Colombo on 15 January 1897. The news of the Swami's return had already reached India, and the people everywhere, throughout the country, were afire with enthusiasm to receive him. He was no more the unknown *sannyāsin*. In every city, small or big, committees had been formed to give him a fitting reception. As Romain Rolland says, the Swami 'replied to the frenzied expectancy of the people by his Message to India, a conch sounding the resurrection of the land of Rāma, of Śiva, of Kṛṣṇa, and calling the heroic Spirit, the immortal Ātman, to march to war. He was a general, explaining his *Plan*

of Campaign, and calling his people to rise *en masse*: "My India, arise! Where is your vital force? In your Immortal Soul."' At Madras, he delivered five public lectures, every one of which was a clarion call to throw away weakness and superstition and rise to build a new India. He emphasized that in India 'the key-note of the whole music of the national life' was religion, a religion which preached the 'spiritual oneness of the whole universe', and when that was strengthened, everything else would take care of itself. He did not spare his criticism, however, castigating his countrymen for aping the West, for their blind adherence to old superstitions, for their caste prejudices, and so on.

From Madras the Swami sailed for Calcutta and arrived there on 20 February. His native city gave him a grand welcome, and here the Swami paid a touching tribute to his Master: 'If there has been anything achieved by me, by thoughts, or words, or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped anyone in the world, I lay no claim to it, it was his. ... If this nation wants to rise, take my word for it, it will have to rally round his name.'

To establish his work on a firm basis, the Swami summoned all the monastic and lay

disciples of Sri Ramakrishna to a meeting at Balaram Bose's house, and the Ramakrishna Mission was formed in May 1897. The aims and ideals of the Mission propounded by the Swami were purely spiritual and humanitarian. He had inaugurated the machinery for carrying out his ideas.

When plague broke out in Calcutta in May 1898, he organized relief work with the help of the members of the monastery and lay disciples. After the plague was under control, the Swami and his western disciples left for Nainital and Almora. This was a period of great preparation and training for his western disciples, especially Sister Nivedita. On 16 June, the Swami left for Kashmir with some of these disciples. This trip to Kashmir was an unforgettable experience both for the Swami and for the disciples. At the end of July, the Swami journeyed with Sister Nivedita to the holy shrine of Amarnāth. Observing meticulously every little practice demanded by custom, the Swami reached the cave of Amarnāth on 2 August, wearing only a loincloth, his body besmeared with ashes. His whole frame was trembling with emotion; a great mystical experience came over him, of which he never spoke, beyond saying that

Śiva Himself had appeared before him. This was followed by a visit to Kshir Bhavani, the shrine of the Mother Goddess, a few miles away from Srinagar. This proved to be another memorable experience for the Swami. He was full of the Mother and said, quoting from his own poem: 'It all came true, every word of it; and I have proved it, for I have hugged the form of Death.'

When he reached Calcutta on 18 October, he was pale and weak and suffering from various ailments. Despite this, he engaged himself in numerous activities. A piece of land had been acquired at Belur on the west bank of the Ganga, five miles above Calcutta, and the construction of the monastery had started. In January 1899, the monks moved to the new monastery, the now famous Belur Math. The Nivedita Girls' School had been inaugurated earlier. The Bengali monthly *Udbodhan* was also started at this time. And the Seviers fulfilled the Swami's dream of having a monastery in the Himalayas, by starting the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati (Almora) in March 1899. The English monthly *Prabuddha Bharata* had been started at Madras earlier, but on the untimely passing away of its editor in 1898, it ceased publication for a month.

The monthly started again at Almora under the editorship of Swami Swarupananda, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda, and in 1899, it was transferred to the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati.

During this period, the Swami constantly inspired the *sannyāsins* and *brahmacārins* at the Math towards a life of intense spirituality and service, for one's own emancipation and the good of one's fellow men—*Ātmano mokṣārthaṁ jagat hitāya ca*, as he put it.

But the Swami's health was failing. And his plan to revisit the West was welcomed by his brother monks, in the hope that this would improve his health.

ACROSS THE WORLD AGAIN

Swami Vivekananda left India on 20 June 1899, taking with him Swami Turiyananda and Sister Nivedita. The journey with the Swami was a great education to both of them. Sister Nivedita wrote: 'From the beginning to the end, a vivid flow of stories went on. One never knew what moment would bring the flash of intuition and the ringing utterance of some fresh truth.' After touching Madras, Colombo, Aden, and Marseilles *en route*, the

ship arrived at London on 31 July. The trip was beneficial to the Swami's health.

After spending two weeks in London, he sailed for New York. Arriving there, he went with Mr. and Mrs. Leggett to their beautiful country home called Ridgely Manor on the River Hudson. The Swami stayed at this country retreat until 5 November and then went to the west coast. He visited Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, and also made short trips to Chicago and Detroit. Now the conviction that the East and the West ought to be mutually helpful and must co-operate with each other grew stronger upon him. The mere material brilliance of the West could not dazzle him, nor could the emphasis on spirituality in India hide her social and economic drawbacks.

He said to Nivedita: 'Social life in the West is like a peal of laughter; but underneath, it is a wail. It ends in a sob. ... Here in India, it is sad and gloomy on the surface, but underneath are carelessness and merriment.' The West had tried to conquer external nature, and the East had tried to conquer internal nature. Now East and West must work hand in hand for the good of each other, without destroying the special characteristics of each.

The West has much to learn from the East, and the East has much to learn from the West; in fact, the future has to be shaped by a proper fusion of the two ideals. Then there will be neither East nor West, but one humanity.

The main event of this period was the starting of the Shanti Ashrama in Northern California, which he placed under the charge of Swami Turiyananda. A Vedanta centre at San Francisco was also inaugurated. He also delivered a number of lectures in the western cities during this period. But the Swami was becoming more and more aware of the approaching end. He wrote to Miss MacLeod: 'My boat is nearing the calm harbour from which it is never more to be driven out.'

On 1 August 1900, he arrived in Paris to participate in the Congress of the History of Religions, held there on the occasion of the Universal Exposition. With some friends, he left Paris in October and visited Hungary, Rumania, Serbia, and Bulgaria, before arriving at Constantinople. Then they proceeded to Athens and Cairo. In Cairo, the Swami suddenly became restless to return to India; he had a premonition of Capt. Sevier's death. He took the first available boat and hurried back to India and reached the Belur Math

on 9 December 1900, without any previous intimation. It was a pleasant surprise to his brother monks and disciples, who greatly rejoiced at his return.

THE JOURNEY'S END

At the Math, Swami Vivekananda heard that Capt. Sevier had passed away on 28 October, and he left immediately for Mayavati to console Mrs. Sevier. Arriving there on 3 January 1901, he stayed for a fortnight. The grandeur of the scenery of this Himalayan Ashrama, dedicated to Advaita, delighted him. In spite of his ill health and the severe cold, he wandered in the woods and around an artificial lake, happy and carefree.

Returning to Belur, he stayed there for seven weeks and then left for East Bengal and Assam. His mother, who had expressed an earnest desire to visit the holy places there, went with him. 'This is the one great wish of a Hindu widow,' he wrote to Mrs. Bull. 'I have brought only misery to my people. I am trying to fulfil this one wish of hers.' He returned to the Math in the second week of May 1901, after visiting Nangalbandh, Kamakhya, and Shillong during the tour, and

delivering a few lectures at Dacca and Shillong.

Now the Swami tried to lead a carefree life at the monastery. He would roam about the Math grounds, sometimes clad only in his loin-cloth; or he would supervise the cooking; or sit with the monks singing devotional songs. Sometimes, he would be seen imparting spiritual instructions to the visitors, at other times engaged in serious study in his room or explaining to the members of the Math the intricate passages of the scriptures and unfolding to them his schemes for future work. He freed himself entirely from all formal duties by executing a Deed of Trust in favour of his brother disciples, transferring to them all the properties, including the Belur Math, so far held in his name.

Towards the end of 1901, two learned Buddhists came from Japan to invite him to attend the forthcoming Congress of Religions there. The Swami could not accept their invitation, but went with them to Bodh Gaya and from there to Varanasi. At Varanasi, he was delighted to see a few young men who, under the inspiration of his message, had started nursing the poor and the needy. Their work

formed the nucleus of the future Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service.

The Swami knew his end was nearing. All his actions during the last days were deliberate and significant. He said that smaller plants cannot grow under the shade of a big tree. On 4 July 1902, he meditated from 8 to 11 in the morning, rather unusually. In the afternoon, he went out for a walk with Swami Premananda and explained his plan to start a Vedic school. In the evening, he retired to his room and spent an hour in meditation. Then he lay down quietly and after some time took two deep breaths and passed into eternal rest.

He had renounced his mortal body, but his words uttered in 1896 to Mr. Eric Hammond in London remained to reassure everyone of his immortality: 'It may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body—to cast it off like a worn-out garment. But I shall not cease to work! I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God!'

FAITH AND STRENGTH

He is an atheist who does not believe in himself. The old religions said that he was an atheist who did not believe in God. The new religion says that he is an atheist who does not believe in himself. (II.301)

The history of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the divinity within. You can do anything. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man or a nation loses faith, death comes. (VIII.228)

Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God—this is the secret of greatness. If you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners have now and again introduced into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. (III.190)

Never think there is anything impossible for the soul. It is the greatest heresy to think so. If there is sin, this is the only sin—to say that you are weak, or others are weak. (II.308)

Whatever you think, that you will be. If you think yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be. (III.130)

Be free; hope for nothing from anyone. I am sure if you look back upon your lives you will find that you were always vainly trying to get help from others which never came. All the help that has come was from within yourselves. (II.324)

Never say, 'No', never say, 'I cannot', for you are infinite. Even time and space are as nothing compared with your nature. You can do anything and everything, you are almighty. (II.300)

Ye are the Children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal. (I.11)

Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is only a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backslidings; hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more. (II.152)

The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength. Teach men of the strength that is already within them. (II.300)

If there is one word that you find coming out like a bomb from the Upaniṣads, bursting like a bomb-shell upon masses of ignorance, it is the word *fearlessness*. (III.160)

If you look, you will find that I have never quoted anything but the Upaniṣads. And of the Upaniṣads, it is only that one idea *strength*. The quintessence of the Vedas and Vedānta and all lies in that one word. (VIII.267)

Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the *Gītā*. These are bold words; but I have to say them, for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. You will understand the *Gītā* better

with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. (III.242)

This is the one question I put to every man. ... Are you strong? Do you feel strength?—for I know it is truth alone that gives strength. ... Strength is the medicine for the world's disease. (II.201)

This is the great fact: Strength is life, weakness is death. Strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal; weakness is constant strain and misery, weakness is death. (II.3)

To succeed, you must have tremendous perseverance, tremendous will. 'I will drink the ocean,' says the persevering soul, 'at my will mountains will crumble up.' Have that sort of energy, that sort of will, work hard, and you will reach the goal. (I.178)

Men, men, these are wanted: everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionized. (III.223-24)

Are not drums made in the country? Are not trumpets and kettle-drums available in India? Make the boys hear the deep-toned sound of these instruments. Hearing from

boyhood the sound of these effeminate forms of music, ... the country is well-nigh converted into a country of women. (VII.232)

Death is better than a vegetating ignorant life; it is better to die on the battle-field than to live a life of defeat. (II.124)

Come, do something heroic! Brother, what if you do not attain *mukti*, what if you suffer damnation a few times? Is the saying untrue: 'There are some saints who, full of holiness in thought, word, and deed, please the whole world by their numerous beneficent acts, and who develop their own hearts by magnifying an atom of virtue in others as if it were as great as a mountain'? (VI.314-15)

Can anything be done unless everybody exerts himself to his utmost? 'It is the man of action, the lion-heart, that the Goddess of Wealth resorts to.' No need of looking behind. FORWARD! We want infinite energy, infinite zeal, infinite courage, and infinite patience, then only will great things be achieved. (VI.383-84)

Be not in despair; the way is very difficult, like walking on the edge of a razor; yet despair not, arise, awake, and find the ideal, the goal. (II.124)

Why weepest thou, brother? There is neither death nor disease for thee. Why weepest thou, brother? There is neither misery nor misfortune for thee. Why weepest thou, brother? Neither change nor death was predicated of thee. Thou art Existence Absolute. ... Be your own Self. (V.275)

Let people say whatever they like, stick to your own convictions, and rest assured, the world will be at your feet. They say, 'Have faith in this fellow or that fellow', but I say, 'Have faith in yourself first', that's the way. Have faith in yourself—all power is in you—be conscious and bring it out. Say, 'I can do everything.' 'Even the poison of a snake is powerless if you can firmly deny it.' (VI.274)

Once when I was in Varanasi, I was passing through a place where there was a large tank of water on one side and a high wall on the other. It was in the grounds where there were many monkeys. The monkeys of Varanasi are huge brutes and are sometimes surly. They now took it into their heads not to allow me to pass through their street, so they howled and shrieked and clutched at my feet as I passed. As they pressed closer, I began to run, but the faster I ran, the faster came

the monkeys and they began to bite at me. It seemed impossible to escape, but just then I met a stranger who called out to me, 'Face the brutes'. I turned and faced the monkeys, and they fell back and finally fled. That is a lesson for all life—face the terrible, face it boldly. (I.338)

Stand up and fight! Not one step back, that is the idea. Fight it out, whatever comes. Let the stars move from the sphere! Let the whole world stand against us! Death means only a change of garment. What of it? Thus fight! You gain nothing by becoming cowards. Taking a step backward, you do not avoid any misfortune. You have cried to all the gods in the world. Has misery ceased? ... The gods come to help you when you have succeeded. So what is the use? Die game. ... You are infinite, deathless, birthless. Because you are infinite spirit, it does not befit you to be a slave. Arise! Awake! Stand up and fight! (I.461)

POWERS OF THE MIND

Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success. ... If we really want to be blessed, and make others blessed, we must go deeper. (I.177)

All the great prophets, saints, and seers of the world—what did they do? In one span of life they lived the whole life of humanity, traversed the whole length of time that it takes ordinary humanity to come to perfection. In one life they perfect themselves; they have no thought for anything else, never live a moment for any other idea, and thus the way is shortened for them. This is what is meant by concentration, intensifying the power of assimilation, thus shortening the time. (I.157)

The more this power of concentration, the more knowledge is acquired, because this is

the one and only method of acquiring knowledge. Even the lowest shoeblack, if he gives more concentration, will black shoes better; the cook with concentration will cook a meal all the better. In making money, or in worshipping God, or in doing anything, the stronger the power of concentration, the better will that thing be done. This is the one call, the one knock, which opens the gates of nature, and lets out floods of light. (II.391)

How has all the knowledge in the world been gained but by the concentration of the powers of the mind? The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point; that is the secret. (I.130-31)

No force can be created; it can only be directed. Therefore we must learn to control the grand powers that are already in our hands and by will power make them spiritual instead of merely animal. Thus it is clearly seen that chastity is the cornerstone of all morality and of all religion. (VIII.46)

Free! We who cannot, for a moment, govern our own minds, nay, cannot hold our minds on a subject, focus it on a point to the exclusion of everything else for a moment! Yet we call ourselves free. Think of it! ... The mind uncontrolled and unguided will drag us down, down, for ever—rend us, kill us; and the mind controlled and guided will save us, free us. (VI.30)

The main difference between men and the animals is the difference in their power of concentration. All success in any line of work is the result of this. ... The difference in their power of concentration also constitutes the difference between man and man. Compare the lowest with the highest man. The difference is in the degree of concentration. (VI.37)

Ninety per cent of thought-force is wasted by the ordinary human being, and therefore he is constantly committing blunders; the trained man or mind never makes a mistake. (VI.123-24)

What work do you expect from men of little hearts? Nothing in the world! You must have an iron will if you would cross the ocean.

You must be strong enough to pierce mountains. (VI.297)

Good and evil thoughts are each a potent power, and they fill the universe. As vibration continues, so thought remains in the form of thought until translated into action. For example, force is latent in the man's arm until he strikes a blow, when he translates it into activity. We are the heirs of good and evil thought. If we make ourselves pure and the instruments of good thoughts, these will enter us. The good soul will not be receptive to evil thoughts. (VI.134)

In the history of mankind, you will find that there come these Messengers, and that from their very birth their mission is found and formed. The whole plan is there, laid down; and you see them swerving not one inch from that. Because they come with a mission, they come with a message. ... When they speak, each word is direct; it bursts like a bomb-shell. What is in the word, unless it has the Power behind? What matters it what language you speak, and how you arrange your language? What matters it whether you speak correct grammar or with fine rhetoric? What matters it whether your language is or-

namental or not? The question is: Whether or not you have anything to give? It is a question of giving and taking, and not listening. Have you anything to give?—that is the first question. If you have, then, give. (IV.122-24)

Whatever you do, devote your whole mind, heart, and soul to it. I once met a great *sannyāsin*, who cleansed his brass cooking utensils, making them shine like gold, with as much care and attention as he bestowed on his worship and meditation. (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 284)

How to attain purity living this life? Shall we all go to the forest caves? What good would it do? If the mind is not under control, it is no use living in a cave because the same mind will bring all disturbances there. We will find twenty devils in the cave because all the devils are in the mind. If the mind is under control, we can have the cave anywhere, wherever we are.

It is our own mental attitude which makes the world what it is for us. Our thoughts make things beautiful, our thoughts make things ugly. The whole world is in our own minds. Learn to see things in the proper light. (I.440-41)

MAN : THE MAKER OF HIS DESTINY

What do I care if Mohammed *was* a good man, or Buddha! Does that alter *my* own goodness or evil? Let us be good for our own sake on our own responsibility! Not because somebody way back there was good! (*Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 273)

We are responsible for what we are; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act. (I.31)

This human body is the greatest body in the universe, and a human being the greatest being. Man is higher than all animals, than all angels; none is greater than man. (I.142)

Man is man so long as he is struggling to rise above nature, and this nature is both inter-

nal and external. ... And if we read the history of nations between the lines, we shall always find that the rise of a nation comes with an increase in the number of such men; and the fall begins when this pursuit after the Infinite, however vain Utilitarians may call it, has ceased. That is to say, the mainspring of the strength of every race lies in its spirituality, and the death of that race begins the day that spirituality wanes and materialism gains ground. (II.64-65)

This world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong. (V.410)

All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within, and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly. Each individual has to work out his own salvation; there is no other way, and so also with nations. ... It is very easy to point out the defects of institutions, all being more or less imperfect, but he is the real benefactor of humanity who helps the individual to overcome his imperfections under whatever institutions he may live. The individuals being raised, the nation and its institutions are bound to rise. (V.415-16)

You have to grow from inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul. (V.410)

Men in general lay all the blame of life upon their fellow-men, or, failing that, on God, or they conjure up a ghost, and say it is fate. Where is fate, and who is fate? We reap what we sow. We are the makers of our own fate. None else has the blame, none has the praise. The wind is blowing; those vessels whose sails are unfurled catch it, and go forward on their way, but those which have their sails furled do not catch the wind. Is that the fault of the wind? (II.224)

Say, 'This misery that I am suffering is of my own doing, and that very thing proves that it will have to be undone by me alone.' That which I created, I can demolish; that which is created by someone else I shall never be able to destroy. Therefore, stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creator of your own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves. (II.225)

Make your own future. 'Let the dead past bury its dead.' The infinite future is before you, and you must always remember that each word, thought, and deed, lays up a store for you and that as the bad thoughts and bad works are ready to spring upon you like tigers, so also there is the inspiring hope that the good thoughts and good deeds are ready with the power of a hundred thousand angels to defend you always and for ever. (II.225)

'Ours not to reason why, ours but to do and die.' Be of good cheer and believe that we are selected by the Lord to do great things, and we will do them. (V.23)

Unfortunately, in this life, the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. (II.152)

Man begins to struggle and fight against nature. He makes many mistakes, he suffers. But eventually he conquers nature and realizes his freedom. When he is free, nature becomes his slave. (VIII.249)

I disagree with the idea that freedom is obedience to the laws of nature. I do not understand what that means. According to the history of human progress, it is disobedience to nature that has constituted that progress. (VIII.257)

The world can be good and pure, only if our lives are good and pure. It is an effect, and we are the means. Therefore, let us purify ourselves. Let us make ourselves perfect. (II.9)

What is the use of fighting and complaining? That will not help us to better things. He who grumbles at the little thing that has fallen to his lot to do will grumble at everything. Always grumbling, he will lead a miserable life, and everything will be a failure. But that man who does his duty as he goes, putting his shoulder to the wheel, will see the light, and higher and higher duties will fall to his share. (V.242)

Do not fly away from the wheels of the world-machine, but stand inside it and learn the secret of work. Through proper work done inside, it is also possible to come out. (I.115)

Every thought that we think, every deed that we do, after a certain time becomes fine, goes into seed form, so to speak, and lives in the fine body in a potential form, and after a time it emerges again and bears its results. These results condition the life of man. Thus he moulds his own life. Man is not bound by any other laws excepting those which he makes for himself. (II.348)

My ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is: to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life. (VII.501)

Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success and, above all —*love*. (VI.281)

Life is ever expanding, contraction is death. The self-seeking man who is looking after his personal comforts and leading a lazy life— there is no room for him even in hell. (VI.294)

I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him. ... We must reason; and when reason proves to us the truth of these prophets and great men

about whom the ancient books speak in every country, we shall believe in them. We shall believe in them when we see such prophets among ourselves. We shall then find that they were not peculiar men, but only illustrations of certain principles. (VI.12-13)

Why should you not try to hit the mark? We become wiser through failures. Time is infinite. Look at the wall. Did the wall ever tell a lie? It is always the wall. Man tells a lie—and becomes a god too. It is better to do something; never mind even if it proves to be wrong; it is better than doing nothing. The cow never tells a lie, but she remains a cow, all the time. Do something! (IV.126-27)

Go on doing good, thinking holy thoughts continuously; that is the only way to suppress base impressions. Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character. ... The chaste brain has tremendous energy and gigantic will-power. (I.208, 263)

We can overcome the difficulty by constant practice. We must learn that nothing

can happen to us, unless we make ourselves susceptible to it. (II.7)

I was once travelling in the Himalayas, and the long road stretched before us. We poor monks cannot get any one to carry us, so we had to make all the way on foot. There was an old man with us. ... He said, 'Oh Sir, how to cross it; I cannot walk any more; my chest will break.' I said to him, 'Look down at your feet.' He did so, and I said, 'The road that is under your feet is the road that you have passed over and is the same road that you see before you; it will soon be under your feet.' The highest things are under your feet, because you are Divine Stars. (VIII.186-87)

'It is the coward and the fool who says, "This is fate"'—so says the Sanskrit proverb. But it is the strong man who stands up and says, 'I will make my fate'. It is people who are getting old who talk of fate. Young men generally do not come to astrology. (VIII.184)

If you really want to judge of the character of a man, look not at his great performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man.

Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is the really great man whose character is great always, the same wherever he be. (I.29)

Every good thought that we send to the world without thinking of any return, will be stored up there and break one link in the chain, and make us purer and purer, until we become the purest of mortals. (I.116)

If you project hatred and jealousy, they will rebound on you with compound interest. No power can avert them; when once you have put them in motion, you will have to bear them. Remembering this will prevent you from doing wicked things. (I.262)

Everything is conscious which rebels against nature: there, consciousness is manifested. Just try to kill a little ant, even it will once resist to save its life. Where there is struggle, where there is rebellion, there is the sign of life, there consciousness is manifested. (VI.453)

Isn't it man that makes money? Where did you ever hear of money making man? If you can make your thoughts and words per-

fectly at one, if you can, I say, make yourself one in speech and action, money will pour in at your feet of itself, like water. (VI.455)

The road to the Good is the roughest and steepest in the universe. It is a wonder that so many succeed, no wonder that so many fall. Character has to be established through a thousand stumbles. (VIII.382)

Each work has to pass through these stages—ridicule, opposition, and then acceptance. Each man who thinks ahead of his time is sure to be misunderstood. So opposition and persecution are welcome, only I have to be steady and pure and must have immense faith in God, and all these will vanish. (V.91)

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details. (I.257)

Each one thinks his method is best. Very good! But remember, it may be good for *you*. One food which is very indigestible to one is

very digestible to another. Because it is good for you, do not jump to the conclusion that your method is everybody's method, that Jack's coat fits John and Mary. All the uneducated, uncultured, unthinking men and women have been put into that sort of strait jacket! Think for yourselves. Become atheists! Become materialists! That would be better. Exercise the mind! What right have you to say that this man's method is wrong? It may be wrong for you. That is to say, if you undertake the method, you will be degraded; but that does not mean that he will be degraded. Therefore, if you have knowledge and see a man weak, do not condemn him. Go to his level and help him if you can. He must grow. I can put five bucket-fuls of knowledge into his head in five hours. But what good will it do? He will be a little worse than before. (I.470)

Go and preach to all, 'Arise, awake, sleep no more; within each of you there is the power to remove all wants and all miseries. Believe this, and that power will be manifested.' ... If you can think that infinite power, infinite knowledge and indomitable energy lie within you, and if you can bring out that power, you also can become like me. (VI.454)

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. (IV.358)

What is education? Is it book-learning? No. Is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education. (IV.490)

To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts. If I had to do my education over again, and had any voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will. (VI.38-39)

The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion—is it worth

the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs. (VII.147-48)

Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. (III.302)

Knowledge is inherent in man; no knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside. ... We say Newton discovered gravitation. Was it sitting anywhere in a corner waiting for him? It was in his own mind; the time came and he found it out. All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind; the infinite library of the universe is in your own mind. The external world is simply the suggestion, the occasion, which sets you to study your own mind. (I.28)

Every one wants to command, and no one wants to obey; and this is owing to the absence of that wonderful *brahmacarya* system of yore. First, learn to obey. The command

will come by itself. Always first learn to be a servant, and then you will be fit to be a master. (III.134-35)

Education, education, education alone! Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own poor people, and I used to shed tears. What made the difference? Education was the answer I got. (IV.483)

What we want is this *śraddhā*. Unfortunately, it has nearly vanished from India, and this is why we are in our present state. What makes the difference between man and man is the difference in this *śraddhā* and nothing else. What makes one man great and another weak and low is this *śraddhā*. (III.319)

Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness. Give that up. Be strong and have this *śraddhā*, and everything else is bound to follow. (III.320)

The only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, *to develop their lost individuality*. ... Give them ideas—

that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization comes in the law of nature. ... Now if the mountain does not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. (IV.362-63)

We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet. (V.342)

Is that education, as a result of which the will, being continuously choked by force through generations, is now well-nigh killed out; under whose sway, why mention new ideas, even the old ones are disappearing one by one; is that education which is slowly making man a machine? It is more blessed, in my opinion, even to go wrong, impelled by one's free will and intelligence, than to be good as an automaton. (IV.490)

What we want are Western science coupled with Vedānta, *brahmacarya* as the guiding motto, and also *śraddhā* and faith in one's own self. ... Vedānta says that within man is

all knowledge—even in a boy it is so—and it requires only an awakening, and that much is the work of a teacher. ... But the root is religion. Religion is as the rice, and everything else, like the curries. Taking only curries causes indigestion, and so is the case with taking rice alone. (V.366)

Do you see, simply by the observance of strict *brahmacarya* (continence) all learning can be mastered in a very short time—one has an unfailing memory of what one hears or knows but once. It is owing to this want of continence that everything is on the brink of ruin in our country. (VII.224)

My idea of education is personal contact with the teacher—*gurugṛha-vāsa*. Without the personal life of a teacher there would be no education. Take your Universities. What have they done during the fifty years [this was told at Madras in 1897] of their existence? They have not produced one original man. They are merely an examining body. The idea of the sacrifice for the common weal is not yet developed in our nation. (V.224)

Truth does not pay homage to any society, ancient or modern. Society has to pay homage to Truth or die. Societies should be moulded

upon truth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society ... *That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical.* That is my opinion; and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so; and the sooner, the better. (II.84-85)

I say, liberate, undo the shackles of people as much as you can. ... When you would be able to sacrifice all desire for happiness for the sake of society, then you would be the Buddha, then you would be free. (IV.491)

Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:

1. Conviction of the powers of goodness.
2. Absence of jealousy and suspicion.
3. Helping all who are trying to be and do good. (VIII.299)

If your ideal is matter, matter shalt thou be. Behold! Our ideal is the Spirit. That alone exists. Nothing else exists; and like Him, we live for ever. (VIII.72)

The Hindu man drinks religiously, sleeps religiously, walks religiously, marries religiously, robs religiously. ... Each nation has a mission for the world. So long as that mission is not hurt, that nation lives, despite ev-

ery difficulty. But as soon as its mission is destroyed, the nation collapses. (VIII.74-75)

Do you not find in history that the first death-sign of a nation has been unchastity? When that has entered, the end of the race is in sight. (II.101)

Now we are not much more moral than the animals. We are only held down by the whips of society. If society said today, 'I will not punish you if you steal', we should just make a rush for each other's property. It is the policeman that makes us moral. It is social opinion that makes us moral, and really we are little better than animals. (II.164)

The majority of sects will be transient, and last only as bubbles because the leaders are not usually men of character. Perfect love, the heart never reacting, this is what builds character. There is no allegiance possible where there is no character in the leader, and perfect purity ensures the most lasting allegiance and confidence. Take up an idea, devote yourself to it, struggle on in patience, and the sun will rise for you. (VI.135)

We are asked: What good is your Religion to society? Society is made a test of truth.

Now this is very illogical. Society is only a stage of growth through which we are passing. ... If the social state were permanent, it would be the same as if the baby remained a baby. There can be no perfect man-baby; the words are a contradiction in terms, so there can be no perfect society. Man must and will grow out of such early stages. ... My Master used to say, 'Why don't you help your own lotus flower to bloom? The bees will then come of themselves.' (VI.144)

Do not recognize wickedness in others. Wickedness is ignorance, weakness. What is the good of telling people they are weak? Criticism and destruction are of no avail. We must give them something higher; tell them of their own glorious nature, their birthright. (VI.141-42)

What I say is not, 'Reform', but, 'Move on'. Nothing is too bad to reform. Adaptability is the whole mystery of life—the principle underneath which serves to unfold it. Adjustment or adaptation is the outcome of the Self pitted against external forces tending to suppress it. He who adjusts himself best lives the longest. Even if I do not preach this, society is changing, it must change. (VI.110)

Nothing else is necessary but these—*love*, *sincerity*, and *patience*. What is life but growth, i.e. expansion, i.e. love? Therefore all love is life, it is the only law of life; all selfishness is death, and this is true here or hereafter. It is life to do good, it is death not to do good to others. Ninety per cent of human brutes you see are dead, are ghosts—for none lives, my boys, but he who loves. (IV.367)

On one side, new India is saying, 'If we only adopt Western ideas, Western language, Western food, Western dress, and Western manners, we shall be as strong and powerful as the Western nations'; on the other, old India is saying, 'Fools! By imitation, other's ideas never become one's own; nothing, unless earned, is your own. Does the ass in the lion's skin become the lion?'

On one side, new India is saying, 'What the Western nations do is surely good, otherwise how did they become so great?' On the other side, old India is saying, 'The flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment; look out, boys, it is dazzling your eyes. Beware!' (IV.477)

Social life in the West is like a peal of laughter; but underneath, it is a wail. It ends

in a sob. The fun and frivolity are all on the surface: really it is full of tragic intensity. Now here, it is sad and gloomy on the outside, but underneath are carelessness and merriment. (VIII.261-62)

As far back as the days of the Upaniṣads, we have thrown the challenge to the world: 'Not by progeny, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone immortality is reached.' Race after race has taken the challenge up and tried their utmost to solve the world-riddle on the plane of desires. They have all failed in the past—the old ones have become extinct under the weight of wickedness and misery, which lust for power and gold brings in its train, and the new ones are tottering to their fall. The question has yet to be decided whether peace will survive or war; whether patience will survive or non-forbearance, whether goodness will survive or wickedness; whether muscle will survive or brain; whether worldliness will survive or spirituality. We have solved our problem ages ago. ... Our solution is unworldliness—renunciation. (IV.314-15)

SERVE MAN AS GOD

One of the greatest lessons I have learnt in my life is to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end. ... I have been always learning great lessons from that one principle, and it appears to me that all the secret of success is there: to pay as much attention to the means as to the end. (II.1)

Our duty to others means helping others; doing good to the world. Why should we do good to the world? Apparently to help the world, but really to help ourselves. ... Do not stand on a high pedestal and take five cents in your hand and say, 'Here, my poor man,' but be grateful that the poor man is there, so that by making a gift to him you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed, but it is the giver. Be thankful that you are allowed to exercise your power of benevolence and mercy in the world, and thus become pure and perfect. (I.75-76)

It is the level-headed man, the calm man, of good judgment and cool nerves, of great

sympathy and love, who does good work and so does good to himself. (I.79)

Great work requires great and persistent effort for a long time. Neither need we trouble ourselves if a few fail. It is in the nature of things that many should fall, that troubles should come, that tremendous difficulties should arise, that selfishness and all the other devils in the human heart should struggle hard when they are about to be driven out by the fire of spirituality. (VIII.383)

In doing evil we injure ourselves and others also. In doing good we do good to ourselves and to others as well. ... According to *Karma-Yoga*, the action one has done cannot be destroyed until it has borne its fruit; no power in nature can stop it from yielding its results. If I do an evil action, I must suffer for it; there is no power in this universe to stop or stay it. Similarly, if I do a good action, there is no power in the universe which can stop its bearing good results. (I.82)

The watchword of all well-being, of all moral good is not 'I' but 'Thou'. Who cares whether there is a heaven or a hell, who cares if there is a soul or not, who cares if there is an unchangeable or not? Here is the world,

and it is full of misery. Go out into it as Buddha did, and struggle to lessen it or die in the attempt. Forget yourselves; this is the first lesson to be learnt, whether you are a theist or an atheist, whether you are an agnostic or a Vedāntist, a Christian or a Mohammedan. (II.353)

Buddha is the only prophet who said, 'I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is.' ... He works best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else; and when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. (I.117-18)

Selfishness is the chief sin, thinking of ourselves first. He who thinks, 'I will eat first, I will have more money than others, and I will possess everything,' he who thinks, 'I will get to heaven before others, I will get *mukti* before others', is the selfish man. The unselfish man says, 'I will be last, I do not care to go to heaven, I will even go to hell if

by doing so I can help my brothers.' This unselfishness is the test of religion. He who has more of this unselfishness is more spiritual and nearer to Śiva. (III.143)

You cannot help anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help any one of His children, blessed you are; do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. (III.246)

Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not of helping Him. Cut out this word 'help' from your mind. You cannot help; it is blaspheming. You are here yourself at His pleasure. Do you mean to say, you help Him? You worship. When you give a morsel of food to the dog, you worship the dog as God. God is in that dog. He is the dog. He is all and in all. (V.246)

After so much austerity, I have understood this as the real truth—God is present in every *jīva*; there is no other God besides that. 'Who serves *jīva*, serves God indeed.' (VII.247)

If in this hell of a world one can bring a little joy and peace even for a day into the heart of a single person, that much alone is true; this I have learnt after suffering all my life; all else is mere moonshine. (V.177)

One idea that I see clear as daylight is that misery is caused by *ignorance* and nothing else. Who will give the world light? Sacrifice in the past has been the Law, it will be, alas, for ages to come. The earth's bravest and best will have to sacrifice themselves for the good of many, for the welfare of all. Buddhas by the hundred are necessary with eternal love and pity. (VII.501)

Let us calmly and in a manly fashion go to work, instead of dissipating our energy in unnecessary frettings and fumings. I, for one, thoroughly believe that no power in the universe can withhold from anyone anything he really deserves. The past was great no doubt, but I sincerely believe that the future will be more glorious still. (IV.366)

Behold, how men are already in the jaws of the shark of infatuation! Oh, listen to their piteous heart-rending wails. Advance, forward, O ye brave souls, to set free those that

are in fetters, to lessen the burden of woe of the miserable, and to illumine the abysmal darkness of ignorant hearts! Look, how the Vedānta proclaims by beat of drums, 'Be fearless!' (VII.504)

The only way of getting our divine nature manifested is by helping others to do the same. If there is inequality in nature, still there must be equal chance for all—or if greater for some and for some less—the weaker should be given more chance than the strong. In other words, a Brāhmaṇa is not so much in need of education as a Caṇḍāla. If the son of a Brāhmaṇa needs one teacher, that of a Caṇḍāla needs ten. For greater help must be given to him whom nature has not endowed with an acute intellect from birth. It is a madman who carries coals to Newcastle. The poor, the downtrodden, the ignorant—let these be your God. (VI.319)

This is the gist of all worship—to be pure and to do good to others. He who sees Śiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased, really worships Śiva; and if he sees Śiva only in the image, his worship is but preliminary. (III.141-42)

The life of Buddha shows that even a man who does not believe in God, has no metaphysics, belongs to no sect, and does not go to any church, or temple, and is a confessed materialist, even he can attain to the highest. ... He was the only man who was ever ready to give up his life for animals to stop a sacrifice. He once said to a king: 'If the sacrifice of a lamb helps you to go to heaven, sacrificing a man will help you better; so sacrifice me.' The king was astonished. (IV.136)

'The good live for others alone. The wise man should sacrifice himself for others'. I can secure my own good only by doing you good. There is no other way, none whatsoever. (VI.317)

Go from village to village, do good to humanity and to the world at large. Go to hell yourself to buy salvation for others. ... 'When death is so certain, it is better to die for a good cause.' (VI 265-67)

Throughout the history of the world you find great men make great sacrifices and the mass of mankind enjoy the benefit. If you want to give up everything for your own salvation, it is nothing. Do you want to forgo

even your own salvation for the good of the world? You are God, think of that. (VI.280)

This world is not for cowards. Do not try to fly. Look not for success or failure. Join yourself to the perfectly unselfish will and work on. Know that the mind which is born to succeed joins itself to a determined will and perseveres. ... Live in the midst of the battle of life. Anyone can keep calm in a cave or when asleep. Stand in the whirl and madness of action and reach the Centre. If you have found the centre, you cannot be moved. (VI.83-84)

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality. (V.15)

My boy, if you have any respect for my words, the first thing I will advise you to do is to throw open all the doors and windows of your room. In your quarter there are lots of

poor people sunk in degradation and misery. You will have to go to them and serve them with your zeal and enthusiasm. Arrange to distribute medicines to those who are sick, and nurse them with all care, supply food to him who is starving, teach with as much as lies in you the ignorant; and if you begin to serve your brethren in this way, I tell you, my child, you will surely get peace and consolation. (*Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, p.330)

Where is that martial spirit which, at the very outset, requires one to know how to serve and obey and to practise self-restraint! The martial spirit is not self-assertion but self-sacrifice. One must be ready to advance and lay down one's life at the word of command, before he can command the hearts and lives of others. One must sacrifice himself first. (VII.270)

It is fear alone that is death. You have to go beyond all fear. So from this day be fearless. Off at once, to lay down your life for your own liberation and for the good of others. What good is it carrying along a load of bones and flesh! (VI.473)

Trust not to the so-called rich, they are more dead than alive. The hope lies in you—in the meek, the lowly, but the faithful. Have faith in the Lord; no policy, it is nothing. Feel for the miserable and look up for help—it *shall* come. ... I may perish of cold or hunger in this land, but I bequeath to you, young men, this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed. ... Vow, then, to devote your whole lives to the cause of the redemption of these three hundred millions, going down and down every day. (V.16-17)

The history of the world is that of six men of faith, six men of deep pure character. We need to have three things: the heart to feel, the brain to conceive, the hand to work. Make yourself a dynamo. *Feel* first for the world. ... Ask yourself, does your mind react in hatred or jealousy? Good works are continually being undone by the tons of hatred and anger which are being poured out on the world. If you are pure, if you are strong, *you*, *one* man, are equal to the whole world. (VI.144-45)

Will such a day come when this life will go for the sake of others' good? The world is not a child's play—and great men are those who build highways for others with their heart's

blood. This has been taking place through eternity, that one builds a bridge by laying down his own body, and thousands of others cross the river through its help. Be it so! Be it so! (VI.273-74)

RELIGION AND ETHICS

Religion is the idea which is raising the brute unto man, and man unto God. (V.409)

The definition of God and man: Man is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but the centre is located in one spot; and God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is everywhere. (II.33)

The difference between God and the devil is in nothing except in unselfishness and selfishness. The devil knows as much as God, is as powerful as God; only he has no holiness—that makes him a devil. Apply the same idea to the modern world: excess of knowledge and power, without holiness, makes human beings devils. (I.425)

Virtue is that which tends to our improvement, and vice to our degeneration. Man is made up of three qualities—brutal, human, and godly. That which tends to increase the

divinity in you is virtue, and that which tends to increase brutality in you is vice. You must kill the brutal nature and become human, that is, loving and charitable. You must transcend that too and become pure bliss, Sachchidananda, fire without burning, wonderfully loving, but without the weakness of human love, without the feeling of misery. (VI.112)

Unselfishness is God. One may live on a throne, in a golden palace, and be perfectly unselfish; and then he is in God. Another may live in a hut and wear rags, and have nothing in the world; yet, if he is selfish, he is intensely merged in the world. (I.87)

The first sign that you are becoming religious is that you are becoming cheerful. When a man is gloomy, that may be dyspepsia, but it is not religion. ... Misery is caused by sin, and by no other cause. What business have you with clouded faces? It is terrible. If you have a clouded face, do not go out that day, shut yourself up in your room. What right have you to carry this disease out into the world? (I.264-65)

Do you not know from the history of the world where the power of the prophets lay? Where was it? In the intellect? Did any of

them write a fine book on philosophy, on the most intricate ratiocinations of logic? Not one of them. They only spoke a few words. Feel like Christ and you will be a Christ; feel like Buddha and you will be a Buddha. It is feeling that is the life, the strength, the vitality, without which no amount of intellectual activity can reach God. (II.307)

In one word, the ideal of Vedānta is to know man as he really is, and this is its message, that if you cannot worship your brother man, the manifested God, how can you worship a God who is unmanifested? (II.325-26)

If you are really pure, how do you see the impure? For what is within, is without. We cannot see impurity without having it inside ourselves. This is one of the practical sides of Vedānta, and I hope that we shall all try to carry it into our lives. (II.327)

Your godhead is the proof of God Himself. If you are not a prophet, there never has been anything true of God. If you are not God, there never was any God, and never will be. This, says the Vedānta, is the ideal to follow. Every one of us will have to become a prophet, and you are that already. Only *know* it. Never think there is anything impos-

sible for the soul. It is the greatest heresy to think so. If there is sin, this is the only sin—to say that you are weak, or others are weak. (II.308)

The Vedānta says, there is nothing that is not God. ... The living God is within you, and yet you are building churches and temples and believing all sorts of imaginary nonsense. The only God to worship is the human soul in the human body. Of course all animals are temples too, but man is the highest, the Taj Mahal of temples. If I cannot worship in that, no other temple will be of any advantage. (II.321)

The secret of religion lies not in theories but in practice. To be good and to do good—that is the whole of religion. 'Not he that crieth "Lord", "Lord", but he that doeth the will of the Father'. (VI.245)

Anything that brings spiritual, mental, or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet. Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man. A spring of infinite power is coiled up and is inside this little body, and that spring is spreading itself. ... This is the history of man, of religion, civilization, or progress. (VIII.185)

The basic aim of religion is to bring peace to man.. It is not a wise thing for one to suffer in this life so that one can be happy in the next. One must be happy here and now. Any religion that can bring that about is the true religion for humanity. (*Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, p.45-46)

Whenever any religion succeeds, it must have economic value. Thousands of similar sects will be struggling for power, but only those who meet the real economic problem will have it. Man is guided by the stomach. He walks and the stomach goes first and the head afterwards. Have you not seen that? It will take ages for the head to go first. ... When children's dreams begin to vanish and you begin to look at things the way they are, the head goes. Just when the head goes first, you go out. (I.454-55)

Religion deals with the truths of the metaphysical world just as chemistry and the other natural sciences deal with the truths of the physical world. The book one must read to learn chemistry is the book of nature. The book from which to learn religion is your own mind and heart. The sage is often ignorant of physical science, because he reads the wrong

book—the book within; and the scientist is too often ignorant of religion, because he too reads the wrong book—the book without. (VI.81)

You will find many persons in this world who will say: 'I wanted to become religious, I wanted to realize these things, but I have not been able, so I do not believe anything.' Even among the educated you will find these. Large numbers of people will tell you, 'I have tried to be religious all my life, but there is nothing in it.' At the same time you will find this phenomenon: Suppose a man is a chemist, a great scientific man. He comes and tells you this. If you say to him, 'I do not believe anything about chemistry, because I have all my life tried to become a chemist and do not find anything in it', he will ask, 'When did you try?' 'When I went to bed, I repeated "O chemistry, come to me", and it never came.' That is the very same thing. The chemist laughs at you and says: 'Oh, that is not the way. Why did you not go to the laboratory and get all the acids and alkalis and burn your hands from time to time? That alone would have taught you.' Do you take the same trouble with religion? Every science has its own method of learning, and religion is to be learnt the same way. (VI.14-15)

Europe, the centre of the manifestation of material energy, will crumble into dust within fifty years if she is not mindful to change her position, to shift her ground and make spirituality the basis of her life. And what will save Europe is the religion of the Upaniṣads. [Uttered by Swamiji in 1897] (III.159)

We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonizing the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of THE RELIGION, which is Oneness, so that each may choose that path that suits him best. (VI.416)

Be moral. Be brave. Be a heart-whole man—strictly moral, brave unto desperation. Don't bother your head with religious theories. Cowards only sin, brave men never, no, not even in mind. (V.3)

The only definition that can be given of morality is this: *That which is selfish is immoral, and that which is unselfish is moral.* (I.110)

One man may speak beautiful language and beautiful thoughts, but they do not impress people; another man speaks neither

beautiful language nor beautiful thoughts, yet his words charm. Every movement of his is powerful. That is the power of *Ojas*. ... It is only the chaste man or woman who can make the *Ojas* rise and store it in the brain; that is why chastity has always been considered the highest virtue. A man feels that if he is unchaste, spirituality goes away, he loses mental vigour and moral stamina. That is why in all the religious orders in the world which have produced spiritual giants you will always find absolute chastity insisted upon. (I.169-70)

Ethics always says, 'Not I, but thou.' Its motto is: 'Not self, but non-self.' The vain ideas of individualism, to which man clings when he is trying to find that Infinite Power or that Infinite Pleasure through the senses, have to be given up—say the laws of ethics. You have to put *yourself* last, and others before you. The senses say, 'Myself first.' Ethics says, 'I must hold myself last.' Thus, all codes of ethics are based upon this renunciation; destruction, not construction, of the individual on the material plane. That Infinite will never find expression upon the material plane, nor is it possible or thinkable. (II.62-63)

Utilitarian standards cannot explain the ethical relations of men, for, in the first place, we cannot derive any ethical laws from considerations of utility. ... The utilitarian wants us to give up the struggle after the Infinite, the reaching-out for the Supersensuous, as impracticable and absurd, and, in the same breath, asks us to take up ethics and do good to society. Why should we do good? Doing good is a secondary consideration. We must have an ideal. Ethics itself is not the end, but the means to the end. If the end is not there, why should we be ethical? Why should I do good to other men, and not injure them? If happiness is the goal of mankind, why should I not make myself happy and others unhappy? What prevents me? In the second place, the basis of utility is too narrow. ... Utilitarian theories can only work under present social conditions. Beyond that they have no value. But a morality, an ethical code, derived from religion and spirituality, has the whole of infinite man for its scope. It takes up the individual, but its relations are to the Infinite, and it takes up society also—because society is nothing but numbers of these individuals grouped together. (II.63-64)

INDIA: OUR MOTHERLAND

Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force, and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be. ... Will she die? This old Mother of all that is noble or moral or spiritual, the land which the sages trod, the land in which Godlike men still live and breathe? I will borrow the lantern of the Athenian sage and follow you, my brother, through the cities and villages, plains and forests, of this broad world—show me such men in other lands if you can. (IV.347-48)

The debt which the world owes to our Motherland is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes so much as to the pa-

tient Hindu, the mild Hindu. ... Here activity prevailed when even Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of the modern Europeans lived in the forests and painted themselves blue. Even earlier, when history has no record, and tradition dares not peer into the gloom of that intense past, even from then until now, ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every word has been spoken with a blessing behind it and peace before it. (III.105-106)

Can you adduce any reason why India should lie in the ebb-tide of the Aryan nations? Is she inferior in intellect? Is she inferior in dexterity? Can you look at her art, at her mathematics, at her philosophy, and answer 'yes'? All that is needed is that she should de-hypnotize herself and wake up from her age-long sleep to take her true rank in the hierarchy of nations. ... The national ideals of India are RENUNCIATION and SERVICE. Intensify her in those channels, and the rest will take care of itself. (V.226-27)

This national ship of ours, ye children of the Immortals, my countrymen, has been plying for ages, carrying civilization and en-

riching the whole world with its inestimable treasures. For scores of shining centuries this national ship of ours has been ferrying across the ocean of life, and has taken millions of souls to the other shore, beyond all misery. But today it may have sprung a leak and got damaged, through your own fault or whatever cause it matters not. What would you, who have placed yourselves in it, do now? Would you go about cursing it and quarrelling among yourselves! Would you not all unite together and put your best efforts to stop the holes? Let us all gladly give our hearts' blood to do this; and if we fail in the attempt, let us all sink and die together, with blessings and not curses on our lips. (III.461)

Now you understand clearly where the soul of this ogress is—it is in religion. Because no one was able to destroy that, therefore the Hindu nation is still living, having survived so many troubles and tribulations. Well, one Indian scholar asks, 'What is the use of keeping the soul of the nation in religion? Why not keep it in social or political independence, as is the case with other nations?' It is very easy to talk like that. ... The fact is, that the river has come down a

thousand miles from its source in the mountains; does it, or can it go back to its source? If it ever tries to trace back its course, it will simply dry up by being dissipated in all directions. Anyhow the river is sure to fall into the ocean, sooner or later, either by passing through open and beautiful plains or struggling through grimy soil. If our national life of these ten thousand years has been a mistake, then there is no help for it; and if we try now to form a new character, the inevitable result will be that we shall die. (V.459-60)

Hidden under the ashes of apparent death, the fire of our national life is yet smouldering and that the life of this nation is religion, its language religion, and its idea religion; and your politics, society, municipality, plague-prevention work, and famine-relief work—all these things will be done as they have been done all along here, viz. only through religion; otherwise all your frantic yelling and bewailing will end in nothing, my friend! (V.461)

In every country, the means is the same after all, that is, whatever only a handful of powerful men dictate becomes the *fait accompli*; the rest of the men only follow like

a flock of sheep, that's all. I have seen your Parliament, your Senate, your vote, majority, ballot; it is the same thing everywhere, my friend. ... Now the question is this, who are these men of power in India?—they who are giants in religion. It is they who lead our society; and it is they again who change our social laws and usages when necessity demands; and we listen to them silently and do what they command. (V.461)

First of all, try to understand this: Does man make laws, or do laws make man? Does man make money, or does money make man? Does man make name and fame, or name and fame make man? Be a man first, my friend, and you will see how all those things and the rest will follow of themselves after you. Give up that hateful malice, that dog-like bickering and barking at one another, and take your stand on good purpose, right means, righteous courage, and be brave. When you are born a man, leave some indelible mark behind you. (V.462)

None will be able to resist truth and love and sincerity. Are you sincere? unselfish even unto death? and loving? Then fear not, not even death. Onward, my lads! The whole

world requires Light. It is expectant! India alone has that Light, not in magic, mummery, and charlatanism, but in the teaching of the glories of the spirit of real religion—of the highest spiritual truth. That is why the Lord has preserved the race through all its vicissitudes unto the present day. Now the time has come. Have faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you—no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven—but stand up and work! (V.43)

India will be raised, not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love. ... One vision I see clear as life before me: that the ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on Her throne—rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim Her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction. (IV.352-53)

Let New India arise—out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts,

and from markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains. (VII.327)

We Indians suffer from a great defect, viz. we cannot make a permanent organization—and the reason is that we never like to share power with others and never think of what will come after we are gone. (VIII.456-57)

An English friend of mine, named General Strong, was in India during the Sepoy Mutiny. He used to tell many stories about it. One day, in the course of conversation, I asked him how it was that the sepoys who had enough of guns, ammunition, and provisions at their disposal, and were also trained veterans, came to suffer such a defeat. He replied that the leaders among them, instead of advancing forward, only kept shouting from a safe position in the rear, 'Fight on, brave lads', and so forth; but unless the commanding officer goes ahead and faces death, the rank and file will never fight with heart. 'A captain must sacrifice his head.' If you can lay down your life for a cause, then only you can be a leader. But we all want to be leaders without making the necessary sacrifice. And the result is zero—nobody listens to us! (VII.325-26)

Learn obedience first. Among these Western nations, with such a high spirit of independence, the spirit of obedience is equally strong. We are all of us self-important, which never produces any work. Great enterprise, boundless courage, tremendous energy, and, above all, perfect obedience—these are the only traits that lead to individual and national regeneration. These traits are altogether lacking in us. (VI.349)

Jealousy is the bane of our national character, natural to slaves. Even the Lord with all His power could do nothing on account of this jealousy. Think of me as one who has done all his duty and is now dead and gone. Think that the whole work is upon your shoulders. Think that you, young men of our motherland, are destined to do this. Put yourselves to the task. (IV.359-60)

I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others. ... Give and take is the law; and if India wants to raise herself once more, it is absolutely necessary that she brings out her treasures and throws them broadcast among the nations of the earth, and in return be ready to receive

what others have to give her. Expansion is life, contraction is death. Love is life, and hatred is death. We commenced to die the day we began to hate other races; and nothing can prevent our death unless we come back to expansion, which is life. (IV.365-66)

I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for. They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return they get kicks. They are practically our slaves. If we want to regenerate India, we must work for them. (V.222-23)

The more, therefore, the Hindus study the past, the more glorious will be their future, and whoever tries to bring the past to the door of everyone, is a great benefactor to his nation. The degeneration of India came not because the laws and customs of the ancients were bad, but because they were not allowed to be carried to their legitimate conclusions. (IV.324)

There are many things to be done, but means are wanting in this country. We have

brains, but no hands. We have the doctrine of Vedānta, but we have not the power to reduce it into practice. In our books there is the doctrine of universal equality, but in work we make great distinctions. It was in India that unselfish and disinterested work of the most exalted type was preached; but in practice we are awfully cruel, awfully heartless—unable to think of anything besides our own mass-of-flesh bodies. ... I too believe that India will awake again if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country—bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome, and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance. (V.126-27)

The one thing that is at the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor. The poor in the West are devils; compared to them ours are angels, and it is therefore so much the easier to raise our poor. The only

service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, *to develop their lost individuality*. (IV.362)

For the last three-quarters of a century, India has been bubbling over with reform societies and reformers. But, alas, every one of them has proved a failure. They did not know the secret. They had not learnt the great lesson to be learnt. In their haste, they laid all the evils in our society at the door of religion; and like the man in the story, wanting to kill the mosquito that sat on a friend's forehead, they were trying to deal such heavy blows as would have killed man and mosquito together. But in this case, fortunately, they only dashed themselves against immovable rocks and were crushed out of existence in the shock of recoil. Glory unto those noble and unselfish souls who have struggled and failed in their misdirected attempts. Those galvanic shocks of reformatory zeal were necessary to rouse the sleeping leviathan. But they were entirely destructive, and not constructive, and as such they were mortal, and therefore died. Let us bless them and profit by their experience. ... Until all the Hindu race becomes extinct, and a new race takes posses-

sion of the land, such a thing can never be—try East or West, India can never be Europe until she dies. (IV.347)

But mark you, if you give up that spirituality, leaving it aside to go after the materializing civilization of the West, the result will be that in three generations you will be an extinct race; because the backbone of the nation will be broken, the foundation upon which the national edifice has been built will be undermined, and the result will be annihilation all round. (III.153)

Let us all work hard, my brethren; this is no time for sleep. On our work depends the coming of the India of the future. She is there ready waiting. She is only sleeping. Arise and awake and see her seated here on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was—this motherland of ours. (III.154)

Utter no words of condemnation. Close your lips and let your hearts open. Work out the salvation of this land and of the whole world, each of you thinking that the entire burden is on your shoulders. Carry the light and the life of the Vedānta to every door, and rouse up the divinity that is hidden within every soul. (III.199)

Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men. (III.224)

Be steady, and, above all, be pure and sincere to the backbone. Have faith in your destiny. ... It depends upon you who have no money; because you are poor, therefore you will work. Because you have nothing, therefore you will be sincere. Because you are sincere, you will be ready to renounce all. That is what I am just now telling you. (III.445)

Feel, my children, feel; feel for the poor, the ignorant, the downtrodden; feel till the heart stops and the brain reels and you think you will go mad—then pour the soul out at the feet of the Lord, and then will come power, help, and indomitable energy. Struggle, struggle, was my motto for the last ten years. Struggle, still say I. When it was all dark, I used to say, struggle; when light is breaking in, I still say, struggle. Be not afraid, my children. (IV.367)

Have fire and spread all over. Work, work. Be the servant while leading. Be unselfish, and *never listen to one friend in private accusing another*. Have infinite patience, and success

is yours. ... Take care! Beware of everything that is untrue; stick to truth and we shall succeed, maybe slowly, but surely. Work on as if I never existed. Work as if on each of you depended the whole work. Fifty centuries are looking on you, the future of India depends on you. Work on. (IV.369-70)

My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have formulated the idea and have given my life to it. ... They will spread from centre to centre, until we have covered the whole of India. (V.223)

What we want are some young men who will renounce everything and sacrifice their lives for their country's sake. We should first form their lives and then some real work can be expected. (V.352)

Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking the least good of others gradually instils into the heart the strength of a lion. I love you all ever so much, but I wish you all to die working for others—I should rather be glad to see you do that! ... Get up, and put your shoulders

to the wheel—how long is this life for? As you have come into this world, leave some mark behind. Otherwise, where is the difference between you and the trees and stones? (V.382-83)

We now mostly need the ideal of a hero with the tremendous spirit of *rajas* thrilling through his veins from head to foot—the hero who will dare and die to know the Truth—the hero whose armour is renunciation, whose sword is wisdom. We want now the spirit of the brave warrior in the battlefield of life, and not of the wooing lover who looks upon life as a pleasure-garden! (V.388)

Have faith in yourself. You people were once the Vedic *ṛṣis*. Only, you have come in different forms, that's all. I see it clear as daylight that you all have infinite power in you. Rouse that up; arise, arise—apply yourselves heart and soul, gird up your loins. What will you do with wealth and fame that are so transitory? Do you know what I think? I don't care for *mukti* and all that. My mission is to arouse within you all such ideas; I am ready to undergo a hundred thousand rebirths to train up a single man. (VII.176)

My boy, when death is inevitable, is it not better to die like heroes than as stocks and stones? And what is the use of living a day or two more in this transitory world? It is better to wear out than to rust out—specially for the sake of doing the least good to others. (VII.176)

With no strength in the body, no enthusiasm at heart, and no originality in the brain, what will they do—these lumps of dead matter! By stimulating them I want to bring life into them—to this I have dedicated my life. I will rouse them through the infallible power of Vedic mantras. I am born to proclaim to them that fearless message—'Arise! Awake!' Be you my helpers in this work! (VII.182)

Numbers do not count, nor does wealth or poverty; a handful of men can throw the world off its hinges, provided they are united in thought, word, and deed—never forget this conviction. The more opposition there is, the better. Does a river acquire velocity unless there is resistence? The newer and better a thing is, the more opposition it will meet with at the outset. It is opposition which foretells success. (VII.372)

But appreciation or no appreciation, I am born to organize these young men; nay, hundreds more in every city are ready to join me; and I want to send them rolling like irresistible waves over India, bringing comfort, morality, religion, education to the doors of the meanest and the most downtrodden. And this I will do or die. (VIII.298)

If you are really my children, you will fear nothing, stop at nothing. You will be like lions. We must rouse India and the whole world. ... My children must be ready to jump into fire, if needed, to accomplish their work. (V.61-62)

O India! Forget not that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sītā, Sāvitrī, Damayantī; forget not that the God thou worshippest is the great Ascetic of ascetics, the all-renouncing Śaṅkara, the Lord of Umā; forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar; ... forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. (IV.479-80)

Go, all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine, or wherever the people are in distress, and mitigate their sufferings. At the most you may die in the attempt—what of that? How many like you are being born and dying like worms every day? What difference does that make to the world at large? Die you must, but have a great ideal to die for, and it is better to die with a great ideal in life. (V.383-84)

You must not depend on any *foreign help*. Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism. If a nation cannot do that, its time has not yet come. It must wait. (V.109)

Work unto death—I am with you, and when I am gone, my spirit will work with you. This life comes and goes—wealth, fame, enjoyments are only of a few days. It is better, far better to die on the field of duty, preaching the truth, than to die like a worldly worm. Advance! (V.114)

OTHER EXHORTATIONS

Be not anxious. It is against the big tree that the great wind strikes. 'Poking a fire makes it burn better'; 'A snake struck on the head raises its hood'—and so on. When there comes affliction in the heart, when the storm of sorrow blows all around, and it seems light will be seen no more, when hope and courage are almost gone, it is then, in the midst of this great spiritual tempest, that the light of Brahman within gleams. Brought up in the lap of luxury, lying on a bed of roses and never shedding a tear, who has ever become great, who has ever unfolded the Brahman within? (IV.492)

When there is conflict between the heart and the brain, let the heart be followed, because intellect has only one state, reason, and within that, intellect works, and cannot get beyond. It is the heart which takes one to the highest plane, which intellect can never reach; it goes beyond intellect, and reaches

to what is called inspiration. ... Men of heart get the 'butter', and the 'buttermilk' is left for the intellectual. (I.412.13)

Let us all be honest. If we cannot follow the ideal, let us confess our weakness, but not degrade it; let not any try to pull it down. (IV.145)

You must remember that humanity travels not from error to truth, but from truth to truth; it may be, if you like it better, from lower truth to higher truth, but never from error to truth. (IV.147)

The lower the organization, the greater the pleasure in the senses. Very few men can eat a meal with the same gusto as a dog or a wolf. But all the pleasures of the dog or the wolf have gone, as it were into the senses. The lower types of humanity in all nations find pleasure in the senses, while the cultured and the educated find it in thought, in philosophy, in arts and sciences. Spirituality is a still higher plane. (II.66)

The history of the world is the history of persons like Buddha and Jesus. The passionless and unattached do most for the world. (VIII.226)

Every successful man must have behind him somewhere tremendous integrity, tremendous sincerity, and that is the cause of his signal success in life. He may not have been perfectly unselfish; yet he was tending towards it. If he had been perfectly unselfish, his would have been as great a success as that of the Buddha or of the Christ. The degree of unselfishness marks the degree of success everywhere. (V.240)

Truth, purity, and unselfishness—wherever these are present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof. Equipped with these, one individual is able to face the whole universe in opposition. (IV.279)

Go on! Do not look back if you think you have done something that is not right. Now, do you believe you could be what you are today, had you not made those mistakes before? Bless your mistakes, then. They have been angels unawares. Blessed be torture! Blessed be happiness! Do not care what be your lot. Hold on to the ideal. March on! (V.253)

Doing good to others is virtue (*dharma*); injuring others is sin. Strength and manli-

ness are virtue; weakness and cowardice are sin. Independence is virtue; dependence is sin. Loving others is virtue; hating others is sin. Faith in God and in one's own Self is virtue; doubt is sin. Knowledge of oneness is virtue; seeing diversity is sin. (V.419)

In modern times, if a man quotes a Moses or a Buddha or a Christ, he is laughed at; but let him give the name of a Huxley, a Tyndall, or a Darwin, and it is swallowed without salt. 'Huxley has said it', that is enough for many. We are free from superstitions indeed! That was a religious superstition, and this is a scientific superstition; only, in and through that superstition came life-giving ideas of spirituality; in and through this modern superstition come lust and greed. That superstition was worship of God, and this superstition is worship of filthy lucre, of fame or power. That is the difference. (II.74)

True equality has never been and never can be on earth. How can we all be equal here? This impossible kind of equality implies total death. ... What makes the difference between man and man? It is largely the difference in the brain. Nowadays no one but

a lunatic will say that we are all born with the same brain power. (I.113-14)

My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate. Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now, and then decide. We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will be done by nature according to her laws. Work hard, be steady. ... Keep the motto before you—Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion. (V.29)

Let people praise you or blame you, let fortune smile or frown upon you, let your body fall today or after a yuga, see that you do not deviate from the path of Truth. How much of tempests and waves one has to weather, before one reaches the haven of Peace! The greater a man has become, the fiercer ordeal he has had to pass through. (VII.126)

It is my firm conviction that no great work is accomplished in this world by low cunning. (VII.125)

This I have seen in life—he who is over-cautious about himself falls into dangers at every step; he who is afraid of losing honour and respect, gets only disgrace; he who is always afraid of loss always loses. (VIII.433)

I know my mission in life, and no chauvinism about me; I belong as much to India as to the world. ... Do you mean to say I am born to live and die one of those caste-ridden, superstitious, merciless, hypocritical, atheistic cowards that you find only amongst the educated Hindus? I hate cowardice; I will have nothing to do with cowards or political nonsense. I do not believe in any politics. God and truth are the only politics in the world, everything else is trash. (V.95-96)

If I do not find bliss in the life of the Spirit, shall I seek satisfaction in the life of the senses? If I cannot get nectar; shall I fall back upon ditch water? (V.417)

You are the Pure One; awake and arise, O mighty one, this sleep does not become you. Awake and arise, it does not befit you. Think not that you are weak and miserable. Almighty, arise and awake, and manifest your own nature. It is not fitting that you think

yourself a sinner. It is not fitting that you think yourself weak. Say that to the world, say it to yourselves, and see what a practical result comes, see how with an electric flash everything is manifested, how everything is changed. Tell that to mankind, and show them their power. (II.304)

My hope and faith rest in men like you. Understand my words in their true spirit, and apply yourselves to work in their light. ... I have given you advice enough; now put at least something in practice. Let the world see that your listening to me has been a success. (VII.175)